

Every time I get a phone bill, I get ripped off. The wireless and many long distance companies advertise "\$34.99 monthly", or whatever, but then add THEIR OWN extra mandatory charges which have various made-up labels. Why not a "Senior Executive Golden Parachute Fee"? If Macy's advertised "Levi 501 Jeans, only \$1.99" but then added a \$30.00 "Sales Fee", and maybe a \$20 "Air in our Store to Breathe Fee", would that be fair? Honest? Then why can cell phone companies do it? I support the petition filed by the National Association of State Utility Consumer Advocates and endorsed by other consumer advocacy organizations, including CU. This petition, CG Docket No. 04-208, Petition for Declaratory Ruling Regarding Truth-In-Billing and Billing Format, is long overdue. This is simply fraud. Phone bills should be truthful, easy to read and easy to understand. Advertised and announced prices should be real prices, not some unrelated number that looks good in ad copy. ! Instead, the long distance and wireless bills are filled with surcharges with misleading names and the prices they advertise are simply lies. Because this practice is tolerated by the FCC, long distance and wireless phone companies are able to effectively defraud customers about their charges. These add-ons make the advertised price of service significantly less than the real amount I must pay each month, significantly less than the amount they really charge. Competition does not work when consumers cannot accurately compare prices. The FCC should immediately grant the NASUCA petition to investigate carrier practices related to line item charges on bills for wireline and wireless phone service; to declare certain practices in violation on the Commission's "Truth in Billing" Order and to prohibit carriers from imposing separate monthly fees, line items or surcharges unless expressly mandated by law or the charge is expressly authorized by a governmental authority.